Keeping The Reds Out of Newark

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By Art Buchwald

Newark has been a pothole in the poverty pocket of New Jersey for some time. I went up to talk to the Chamber of Commerce the other night and all the speakers had some great ideas as to how they could get Newark out of its doldrums.

After the dinner was over I retired to my hotel room, when there was a knock on the door. A man who refused to give his name said he had to talk to me. I let him in.

"Listen, all that talk you heard at dinner tonight about improving Newark—forget it."

"Oh?" I said.

"It don't work. We need federal money and we're not going to get it. The mayor keeps going to Washington and all he gets is empty promises. No one down there give a damn about the cities."

"That's true," I agreed.

He said, "Our problem is we keep going to HEW, HUD and the Department of Transportation and all we get is the run-around. There is only one agency in Washington that has money to burn and it doesn't have to answer to anybody."

"You mean the CIA?"

"Right. What we want to do is have them destabilize Newark," he said.

"You have to be kidding."

"I'm not. The CIA spent $8 million to de-stabilize Allende in Chile. If we could get them to spend that kind of money in Newark we'd be in great shape."

"But why would the CIA want to de-stabilize Newark?" I asked. "It's not a threat to the United States."

"Have you walked around it lately?" he replied.

"Looks are not everything," I told him. "You have to do something that would endanger the security of the Western hemisphere. Allende was a Marxist and we couldn't stand something like that so near North America."

"Okay, we'll put out the word that our mayor is a Marxist and then they can send us the aid."

"Would your mayor go along with that?"

"He's so desperate for money for the city, he'll go along with anything."

"That's all well and good, but what can I do for you?"

"Get word back to Kissinger that Newark is about to recognize Castro's government and is planning to nationalize Standard Oil Company of New Jersey. Have him call a meeting of the 40 Committee and let them recommend that the CIA finance the overthrow of the Newark government. If someone from here tells Kissinger, he won't believe us. But since you're the last foreign correspondent to have visited us, he might believe you. The CIA is our only hope."

"But if the CIA de-stabilizes you, they would have to de-stabilize New York, Chicago, Baltimore, and every other city in trouble. They don't have that kind of money."

"How can you be sure?" the man said. "No one knows how much money the CIA has."

"Your idea has merit," I admitted, "and I'm willing to pass it on to Kissinger. But you know the CIA isn't dumb. What makes you think that they would believe that Newark has gone Marxist?"

"What makes you think it won't if we don't get the money?"

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